

ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET				
SUBJECT: (Optional) Office of Information Technology Trial 12 Hour Shift Rotation.				
FROM: Arvel D. Tharp, M.D. D/Medical Services 1D4061 Headquarters		EXTENSION	FILE 87-10569X	DATE 10 March 1987
TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)		DATE		OFFICER'S INITIALS
		RECEIVED	FORWARDED	
1.	Deputy Director for Administration / EYA 7D24 Headquarters	17 MAR 1987	3/12	YK
2.	ADDA			✓
3.	DDA 12 MAR 1987			WBY
4.	↓			
5.	↓			
6.	↓			
7.	D/OIT			
8.				
9.				
10.				
11.				
12.				
13.				
14.				
15.				

1 to 6: I don't view this as an IG matter at this stage, but if an IG team is inspecting in this area they should be asked by OIT to take a look at the issue.

The tone of the OHS memo is a bit sharp. Nevertheless, I think after 6 months of trial use of 12-hour shift rotation OIT should relook the issue. Some people like 12-hour shifts. Others do not! It is unlikely all will be satisfied.

1-1

25 February 1987

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Personnel

FROM: Arvel D. Tharp, M.D.
Director of Medical Services

SUBJECT: Office of Information Technology Trial
12-Hour Shift Rotation

REFERENCE: Memo frm D/OIT to D/Pers, dtd 12 Jun 86, Subj:
Conversion of Communications Operations Center
(COC) to 12-Hour Rotating Shift Schedule

1. In the Fall of 1986 the Office of Information Technology (OIT) began a trial 12-hour shift rotation in the Communications Operations Center with approval of the Director of Personnel (D/OP). D/OP asked D/OMS to monitor the trial period, which has been done. A voluntary survey of all personnel in the affected components was conducted (see attachment). The survey had an unusually high response rate and with clearly 50% of the respondents opposing the 12-hour shift despite heavy lobbying by the supervisors to have personnel endorse the 12-hour shift.

2. From a medical and managerial viewpoint the trial period rotation appeared poorly designed from the beginning but OIT insisted that a trial period should be tried because of their difficulty in assigning people to midnight shifts. I, therefore, did not endorse the trial but neither did I oppose it. The rotation was the worst possible choice for shift work because of constant disruption of family, social and personal routines. Some of the jobs clearly cannot be performed efficiently for a 12-hour period. A number of people sought me out during the trial period to express their dissatisfaction but refused to go on record fearing reprisal from their immediate supervisors. Several people obtained exemptions prescribed by their physicians and several more will obtain such exemptions if the 12-hour rotation becomes permanent.

3. Several employees believe the driving force behind the 12-hour snift was from individuals who commute long distances. From a managerial viewpoint certain inefficiencies were injected into the system by having full shift coverages during periods when the work volume is low but no increase in coverage when work volume is high.

4. Since there does not appear to be any redeeming reason to continue the 12-hour shift rotation, and since the decision is basically managerial, I would urge you and/or the Inspector General to conduct an independent study of the proposal. My recommendation would be to disapprove the 12-hour shift rotation for all and accommodate those few who might choose a 12-hour rotation without imposing it on everyone.

[Redacted Signature Box]

Arvel D. Tharp, J.D.

STAT

Attachment

cc: DD/A /
D/OIT
D/IG

ADMINISTRATIVE INTERNAL USE ONLY
UT-10010021-2

OIT-10296-86

12 JUN 1986

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Personnel

VIA: Deputy Director for Administration
Director of Medical ServicesFROM: Edward J. Maloney
Director of Information TechnologySUBJECT: Conversion of Communications Operations Center
(COC) to 12-Hour Rotating Shift Schedule

1. Action Requested: The purpose of this memorandum is to seek approval of the Director of Personnel for the adoption of a 12-hour rotating shift schedule for operations personnel working duty shifts in the Communications Operations Center (COC), 1B-43 Headquarters, as recommended in paragraph 3.

2. Background:

a. Severe staffing shortages within the COC (which operates around the clock, seven days a week) have forced us to consider changing the normal 8-hour shift rotation to a 12-hour rotation. Current statistics show approximately STAT vacancies among the shift-working positions. Although we are taking steps to resolve the vacancy problem, the lag between recruiting, training, and assignment to production prevents us from anticipating any substantial relief from the situation for several months. We have concluded that a three-section, 12-hour shift schedule is a partial solution to alleviating the present situation, as it allows optimum use of the available personnel and offers other advantages.

b. The proposed schedule calls for three teams to work 12-hour shifts, allowing for one team to be in an off-duty status for a minimum of 48 hours. The built-in overtime of four hours each pay period for each person is not unreasonable and, in fact, should permit us to reduce overtime requirements overall. Additionally, when the permanent mid-watch was first implemented several years ago, it

ADMINISTRATIVE INTERNAL USE ONLY

SUBJECT: Conversion of Communications Operations Center (COC) to 12-Hour Rotating Shift Schedule

was not a difficult task to find volunteers to staff that shift; however, we are now forced to direct people to work the midnight shift, a measure we prefer to avoid.

c. The new 12-hour schedule would affect approximately [] positions in the Message and Data Communications Activity (MDCA) and the U.S. Network Activity (USNA) within the General Operations Group (GOG) of OIT. It does provide for those employees who are unable to work such a 12-hour rotating shift; they are identified as "special category employees." Included in this category are persons having documented serious medical problems, single parents unable to obtain adequate child care, part-time students, annuitants, and contractors. There are advantages to having people in this category as we look to them to help provide operational continuity between shifts through the knowledge gained from working with more than one watch team.

STAT

d. We believe our proposed schedule is one that will satisfy production and employee development requirements, without sacrificing humanitarian considerations. Twelve-hour work schedules are not unique and enjoy popularity where they are in use (the Data Base Control Center (DATEX), [] NPIC, [] and several overseas OC facilities).

STAT

STAT

e. The schedule would be implemented on a trial basis for approximately 120 days, beginning shortly after approval. Prior to the end of that period we would assess the results and determine whether to seek ratification for continuing the schedule.

3. Recommendation: In view of the foregoing, it is recommended approval be granted for a 120-day trial period for a 12-hour rotating schedule.

STAT

[]
Edward J. Maloney

8 July 1986

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Personnel

FROM: Arvel D. Tharp, M.D.
Director of Medical Services

SUBJECT: Conversion of Communications Operations
Center (COC) to 12-Hour Rotating Shift
Schedule

1. The subject proposal has been reviewed in the Office of Medical Services (OMS) at some length. The reasons stated in the memo for making the change do not seem to be supported by the proposal, however, that is an administrative determination and OMS interest is that the impact on the health of the COC personnel be justified for good and sufficient reasons. Therefore, I neither endorse the proposal nor recommend disapproval.

2. A quotation in the Winter 1986 Medical Newsletter (which is a good review of the subject) states "shift work and overtime.....place unusual strain on human physiology and can result in decreased productivity and health."

3. The proposed schedule does appear to stay within certain guidelines namely no more than four on-days in a row and a minimum of two off-days between blocks of on-days. The schedule does provide further for those who are unable to work 12-hour shifts by identifying "special category employees." There is some concern that it is the intention of OIT to apply this exemption only to the trial period.

4. We are very concerned regarding the work/rest cycle in the kinds of jobs and tasks involved in COC especially intense CRT viewing or equipment monitoring. The variety and ability to take breaks are essential in minimizing fatigue and errors and physical symptoms that may otherwise occur in tasks performed over extended periods of time. Managers and employees should adhere to the proviso to take breaks even to the point of directing breaks for reticent workers.

5. If the proposal is approved OMS would be happy to provide a written survey and assist OIT in tabulating data either before or during the trial period. Also, if the proposal is approved we would encourage COC to create four teams instead of the current three to provide greater flexibility in accommodating employees and reduce overtime needs.

Arvel D. Tharp, M.D.

STAT

SUBJECT: Conversion of Communications Operations Center (COC) to
12-Hour Rotating Shift Schedule

CONCUR:

See attached memorandum dated 8 July 1986

Director of Medical Services

Date

STAT

[Redacted Signature]

7/9/86
Date

* Deputy Director for Administration
Let take OMS up on para 5 of OMS memo.

* APPROVED:

STAT

[Redacted Signature]

7/25/86
Date

for Director of Personnel

* Subject to review of OMS evaluation prior to extension
beyond 120-day trial.

OIT COMMUNICATIONS OPERATIONS CENTER

12-HOUR SHIFT EMPLOYEE SURVEY

OCTOBER 1986

To discern the employees' satisfaction with the trial 12-hour shift rota, OIT/COC managers surveyed the shift workers in September and October 1986. OMS received, processed, and analyzed the questionnaires, and herein reports the results.

Sixty of the reportedly eighty distributed questionnaires were returned, a return rate of about 75%. This is very high among Agency voluntary surveys. The comments volunteered by respondents are repeated verbatim with identifying data removed in a separate report, which is currently being completed.

Overall, most people see the 12-hour rota as neutral in its effect on performance, attendance, errors, and morale compared to the prior 8-hour rota. However, if the neutral responses (i.e., those that report no difference between rotas) are eliminated, the extreme responses note a greater frequency of illness, more tardiness, a worse mood, and having more often to fill in during a shift for absent workers since changing to the 12-hour format. Interestingly, although the extreme respondents note that they had to fill in for absent coworkers more, they had to work fewer double shifts or overtime, and they themselves had been absent less often. (Perhaps those who caused the staffing shortages were not available to return questionnaires. Alternatively, this may reflect a simple fact of life on 12s: one may have to fill in more during a longer shift, perhaps because people take longer or more frequent breaks.)

Regardless of how people felt about the effects of the 12-hour rota, there was overwhelming agreement that the trial had lasted long enough and people felt a final commitment to a rota was appropriate. The vote was evenly split on the 12- vs. 8-hour structure. However, this split vote compared only two formats, the old 8-hour rota and the current trial of 12s. Other options were not listed and may warrant a specific vote by the shift workers.

The questionnaire and results follow. Each item shows percent of respondents answering each option; the total may not equal 100% due to rounding. An overall average score on the item is given in the right margin. The average score is on a scale of

1-3 (across the three response options), with the larger values indicating more positive attitudes about the trial 12s. For statistics fans, the "n" denotes number of employees responding to the item, the "Mn" indicates the mean or average score, and the "SD" indicates the standard deviation or the range by which the scores of the middle two-thirds (68%) of the respondents varied from the mean. For example, in item #1, a mean score of 2 and SD of .47 means that 68% of the respondents answered between 1.53 and 2.47 (or $2 \pm .47$). The mean score is a handy and concise way to summarize overall sentiment on any single item.

SURVEY RESPONSES

			<u>n</u>	<u>Mn</u>	<u>SD</u>
1.	I have been	less punctual 12%	60	2.0	.47
		as punctual 78%			
		more punctual 10%			
	arriving at work on the 12-hour schedule as on the 8-hour schedule.				
2.	I have missed	fewer days 23%	56	2.1	.59
		same number of days 64%			
		more days 13%			
	of work on the 12-hour schedule as on the 8-hour schedule.				
3.	I have made	fewer errors 21%	58	2.0	.63
		as many errors 60%			
		more errors 19%			
	in my job on the 12-hour schedule as on the 8-hour schedule.				

- | | | <u>n</u> | <u>Mn</u> | <u>SD</u> |
|----|--|----------|-----------|-----------|
| 4. | My overall productivity (the amount of work I get done during any one period of time) has | | | |
| | increased 28% | 60 | 2.07 | .71 |
| | stayed the same 50% | | | |
| | decreased 22% | | | |
| | during the 12-hour schedule compared to the 8-hour schedule. | | | |
| 5. | I have noticed that I have been ill | | | |
| | less often 21% | 56 | 1.9 | .71 |
| | as often 50% | | | |
| | more often 29% | | | |
| | during the 12-hour schedule compared to the 8-hour schedule. | | | |
| 6. | In general, I think my mood at work has been | | | |
| | better 16% | 61 | 1.7 | .73 |
| | the same 40% | | | |
| | worse 44% | | | |
| | since changing to the 12-hour schedule. | | | |
| 7. | I have had to fill in <u>during my shift</u> for other people who weren't here or had to take breaks | | | |
| | less often 11% | 57 | 1.67 | .66 |
| | as often 46% | | | |
| | more often 44% | | | |
| | since we changed to the 12-hour schedule. | | | |

		<u>n</u>	<u>Mn</u>	<u>SD</u>
8.	I have had to work overtime or double shifts			
	less often	32%	59	2.09 .75
	as often	44%		
	more often	24%		

since we changed to the 12-hour schedule.

9.	My coworkers seem to be doing			
	more work	18%	60	2.0 .61
	as much work	63%		
	less work	18%		

in a given period of time on the 12-hour schedule compared to the 8-hour schedule.

10.	My coworkers seem to be			
	more accurate	00%	60	1.7 .46
	as accurate	70%		
	less accurate	30%		

in their work on the 12-hour compared to the 8-hour schedule.

11.	I feel we've given the 12-hour shift a sufficient trial and should make a permanent decision at this time (one way or the other).	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>n</u>
		68%	32%	59

12.	If we were to make a permanent decision at this time, we should choose the following rota:	<u>8-hour</u>	<u>12-hour</u>	<u>n</u>
		50%	50%	58

My reasons for this choice are ranked as follows
 (Please rank order ALL the following choices, from
 1 - MOST IMPORTANT to - LEAST IMPORTANT.)

	<u>Rank</u>	<u>n</u> = 39
13. More time with my family/friends.	1	
14. Better time of day to commute.	9	
15. More time off in solid chunks.	5	
16. More time off over a two-month's period.	10	
17. Better able to do my job during the shift.	2	
18. Better coverage on the unit.	3	
19. Feel better physically.	4	
20. Family member is more agreeable, or fits better with family member's commitments.	6	
21. Allows time for another commitment of mine.	8	
22. I work <u>less</u> overtime this way.	12	
23. I work <u>more</u> overtime this way (which I like.)	11	
24. I feel better emotionally.	7	
25. If the 12-hour schedule becomes permanent...		
I will stay in my current assignment with pleasure.	<u>Rank</u> 5	<u>%</u> 44%
I don't care; the schedule doesn't make any significant difference in my life or work.	4	7%
I will stay in my current assignment but won't like it.	3	26%
I will seek reassignment within OIT.	2	19%
It won't matter to me. I was planning to leave in any case <u>within the next year</u> regardless of the schedule.	1	4%
<u>Mean score</u> = 3.7 <u>SD</u> = 1.3 <u>n</u> = 57		